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UNCLAS ABU DHABI 04983

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APPROVED: AMB:MJSISON
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ABU DHABI 004983

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR S/CT - RHONDA SHORE, ED SALAZAR

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PTER ASEC AE
SUBJECT: UAE: 2005 ANNUAL TERRORISM REPORTS ON TERRORISM

REF: STATE 193439

¶1. (U) This is the UAE Mission's unclassified submission for the 2005 Country Reports on Terrorism. We will transmit to the Department a classified addendum septel. The information in this report is divided into the four broad categories suggested in the provided style guide, and the septel addendum will be keyed to these same subject headings.

General Assessment

¶2. (U) There were no acts of terrorism against or affecting U.S. citizens or facilities in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during 2005. The UAE continued to provide staunch assistance and cooperation to the global war against terrorism.

¶3. (U) The UAE Government publicly condemned the terror attacks in Amman, Sharm al-Sheikh, London, and Baghdad. In December, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahyan strongly denounced terrorists, saying they had no loyalty to their countries. The Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs, and Endowment drafted Friday prayer sermon guidance and was thus able to issue timely condemnations of terrorist acts and also emphasize the virtues of moderate Islam. The Ministry required all 1,500 mosques that deliver sermons to record them each Friday to ensure that imams adhere to prescribed guidelines and to prevent extremist preaching. All Sunni imams are employees of either the individual emirate or of the Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs, and Endowment. The Ministry of Education continued to implement reforms to limit extremist influence in the schools and to modernize the curriculum. Teachers deemed extremists were quietly dismissed or given non-teaching positions.

¶ 4. (U) In December, the Supreme Council, the top policy making body in the country, decided to place all security agencies under a newly established National Security Council.

The council's decision follows the UAE Government's adoption in August 2004 of an antiterrorism law defining terrorist crimes and punishments, and specifically criminalizing the funding of terrorist organizations. The UAE also undertook several security measures along its land border and at sea to deter terrorists from reaching UAE soil.

¶ 5. (U) In March, the Container Security Initiative (CSI), became operational at Port Rashid and Jebel Ali in the Emirate of Dubai. CSI has five officers co-located with the Dubai Customs Intelligence Unit at Port Rashid. CSI is aimed at screening shipping containers that pass through Dubai ports that are destined for the United States that pose a security threat. On average, CSI reviews approximately 250 bills of lading each week, resulting in 15-20 non-intrusive inspections of U.S.-bound containers. These examinations are conducted jointly with Dubai Customs officers. In addition, Dubai Customs has requested that each and every container that originates in Iran be designated for inspection by the CSI team. Cooperation with Dubai Customs in this area has been outstanding and the Dubai CSI operation is a model representative of the program. On the consular/immigration side, the Department of Homeland Security recently established a Visa Security Unit in the UAE with plans for some outreach with UAE officials.

¶ 6. (U) In suppressing terrorist financing, the UAE Central Bank continued to enforce anti-money laundering regulations aggressively. Tightened oversight and reporting requirements for domestic financial markets resulted in a stronger legal and regulatory framework to deter abuse of the UAE financial system. The Central Bank provided training programs to financial institutions on money laundering and terrorist financing. In April, the Central Bank hosted the third international hawala (informal money remittance and exchange businesses) conference. The Central Bank investigated financial transactions and froze accounts in response to UN resolutions and internal investigations, as well as registering approximately 160 hawala dealers to date. The US Government has provided the UAE with anti-terrorism and anti-money laundering training, as well as technical assistance for bankers, prosecutors, judges, and police.

¶ 7. (U) On June 6, the UAE Cabinet of Ministers approved accession to two U.N. conventions on terrorism, the 1999 Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the 1997 Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings. The federal Supreme Ruling Council is expected to formally ratify the conventions. The UAE is currently a party to eight of the 12 international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism and is considering acceding to the final two: the 1988 Convention on the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the 1988 Protocol on the Safety of Fixed Platforms.

¶ 8. (SBU) The U.S. and UAE began negotiating terms of a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT), but progress was stalled because of UAE insistence to conduct negotiations on an extradition treaty simultaneously. The UAE Constitution prevents the extradition of UAE nationals, and U.S. policy is to not sign extradition treaties with countries that do not extradite their own citizens. While the UAE has cooperated with the U.S. in rendering fugitives in the past, that policy has now changed and U.S. extradition requests were completely unsuccessful in 2005.

Sanctuary (Safe Haven) Assessment

¶ 9. (U) The UAE extended no support for international terrorism, terrorists, or terror groups, nor made any public statements in support of a terrorist-supporting country on a terrorism issue in 2005. There are no areas in the UAE where

terrorists are relatively free to operate.

¶10. (U) As we reported in the 2004 Country Reports on Terrorism, UAE law enforcement agencies have the authority to intercept wire, oral and electronic communications, subject to limitations imposed by prosecution guidelines in the courts. Law enforcement authorities can initiate surveillance and investigation of suspected terrorists/terrorist facilitators based on intelligence information, and that information can be used as evidence in court. In antiterrorism cases, the State Security Department has investigative authority and prosecutors have prosecutorial authority. There is no special examining magistrate with special powers in the antiterrorism area. Intelligence is permitted as evidence in a court. In the event there are legal restrictions in this area, the best work-around is deportation if the suspect is non-Emirati. According to the 2004 anti-terrorism law, suspected terrorists/terrorist facilitators can be held for two weeks, with a two-week extension. Then, extensions of one month can be added incrementally, which is tantamount to being held indefinitely. This is true when a case is pending and during trial. Law enforcement agencies have access to telephones and to a lesser extent email, and if the technical capability is there, access to the suspected terrorist is recorded. There are no weekend passes for suspected terrorists to leave jail, and foreign government service de-briefings are not allowed. The detaining authority collects photographs and fingerprints, but not DNA samples.

Terrorist Groups

¶11. (U) There are no known indigenous Emirati terrorist organizations.

Foreign Government Cooperation

¶12. (U) The UAE continued to show firm resolve in cooperating with the U.S. government to identify, control, and restrict funding to, terrorists or terrorist organizations. The UAE Government has requested and received training from the U.S. In January, May and September, DS/ATA hosted UAE law enforcement officers for various training programs in counterterrorism and diplomatic security. In September, representatives from the U.S. Federal Protective Service provided physical security assessments of public facilities in order to identify further training needs. In December, four UAE police officers participated in DS/ATA training in New York and Washington, D.C., on the antiterrorism response to terror incidents in high-rise buildings.

¶13. (U) U.S.-UAE export control cooperation efforts have also been strong. The UAE recognizes the need to stop the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and related materials. The U.S. Government has been training UAE officials on export controls/nonproliferation with the goal of attaining unilateral UAE adherence to MTCR and other nonproliferation regimes. In Dubai, State Department and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials conducted a training seminar for Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and northern Emirates customs officials and police.

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